

COUGAR HUNTING SEASONS AND RULES



Photo by G. Koehler



Effective through March 31, 2006 (date inclusive)

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ANNUAL LICENSE FEES

See page 10 in the 2005 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Rules Pamphlet.

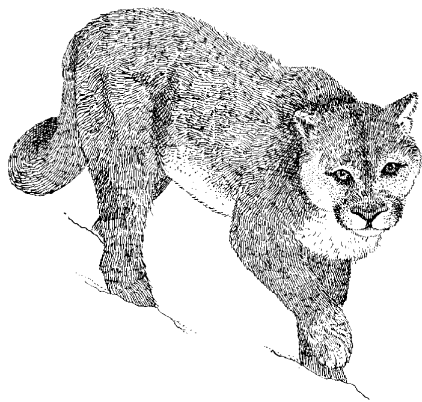
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SUMMARY

This pamphlet is a summary of the hunting seasons and regulations (Chapters 232-12, 232-16 and 232-28 of the Washington Administrative Code) adopted by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. This pamphlet does not contain nor is it intended to contain all department regulations. Regulations specific to the cougar seasons described in this pamphlet are found in Sections 232-28-272, 232-28-285 and 232-12-243 of the Washington Administrative Code. Caution: Emergency regulation changes may occur while seasons described in this pamphlet are in effect and will supersede information contained herein. Area news media will be informed of changes as they occur.



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Regional Offices:

Region 1

(509) 892-1001
2315 N Discovery Place
Spokane Valley, WA 99216-1566

Region 2

(509) 754-4624
1550 Alder St. NW
Ephrata, WA 98823-9699

Region 3

(509) 575-2740
1701 S 24th Ave.
Yakima, WA 98902-5720

Region 4

(425) 775-1311
16018 Mill Creek Blvd.
Mill Creek, WA 98012-1296

Region 5

(360) 696-6211
2108 Grand Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98661-4624

Region 6

(360) 249-4628
48 Devonshire Rd.
Montesano, WA 98563

Website

<http://wdfw.wa.gov>

COUGAR HUNTING SEASON WITH THE AID OF DOGS

On October 1, 2004 the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission started a 3-year pilot cougar hunting season where dogs are used to hunt cougar. The hunts are in Chelan, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties.

Kill Quotas: The new cougar season uses a kill quota system, where hunters may hunt and kill cougar until the allotted numbers of cougar have been killed from each hunt zone or March 31, 2006, whichever occurs first. Kill quotas start September 1 and include all cougar killed during seasons with and without the aid of dogs, as well as depredation permits, landowner kill permits, and WDFW kills.

Cougar Permit Season: Cougars may be hunted from December 1, 2005 until the female zone quota has been killed, the total zone quota has been killed, or March 31, 2006, whichever occurs first (EXCEPT the season opens January 1, 2006 in GMUs 101 and 204).

Pursuit-Only Season: If either the total cougar zone or the female zone quota is reached prior to March 31, 2006, cougar may be pursued with dogs in all or portions of that zone until March 31, 2006. Hunters selected for a kill permit may participate in a pursuit-only season. If a quota is reached, the Department will also issue pursuit-only permits to hunters drawn at random from the unselected pool of applicants. Hunters may not kill cougar during a pursuit-only season.

Quota Hotline: All cougar hunters must call the cougar quota hotline within 24 hours prior to each day hunting cougar to determine if the zone quota has been reached and the zone is closed.

Quota Hotline

Toll-free **1-866-DOG-HUNT** (1-866-364-4868) or (509) 625-4700

Harvest Report: Hunters who harvest a cougar must notify the department within 24 hours of kill (excluding legal state holidays) and provide the hunter's name, date and Game Management Unit of kill, and sex of animal. The raw pelt of the cougar (with proof of sex naturally attached) must be sealed by an authorized department employee within five days of the notification of kill. Any person who takes a cougar must present the cougar skull in such a manner that teeth and biological samples can be extracted to an authorized department employee at the time of sealing. Please call a regional office (page 2) to make arrangements to have a cougar checked.

License/Tag Required: A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar. A second cougar transport tag/license may be purchased to take a second cougar.

Bag Limit: Two (2) cougar during the 2005-2006 hunting season. However, permit holders may not kill a second cougar in a hunt zone until Jan. 15, 2006. It is illegal to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or an adult cougar accompanied by spotted kittens.

Who May Apply: Anyone who is a Washington resident and owns dogs capable of tracking and baying a cougar. If a quota is not reached in a hunt zone by Jan. 15, then the department will issue permits to additional hunters (hunters will be drawn at random from the unselected pool of applicants and must be a resident of one of the five counties).

Dog Handlers: Up to three dog handlers may accompany a permittee while hunting or pursuing cougar; "accompany" means the dog handler and permit hunter must be in the physical presence of each other at the time dogs are released from a leash or unrestrained. Dog handlers may not pursue cougar when the permit hunter is not present at the time dogs are released from a leash or unrestrained. Transporting a dog(s) in a motorized vehicle or walking a dog on a leash is not pursuit. Each permit hunter will be issued three dog handler ID cards and vehicle placards, and each dog handler must have these in their possession while participating in a cougar hunt.

How to Apply: Permit applications may be purchased at any hunting and fishing license dealership, by calling toll-free 1-866-246-9453, or online at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. Permit applications go on sale starting August 7, 2005. The cost of an application for a special hunt permit is \$5.48. Once an application is purchased, there are two ways to submit an application for a cougar permit. You may either call the toll-free permit application submission telephone number 1-877-945-3492 or visit the Internet website at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. See page 22 in the 2005 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Rules pamphlet for more information on how to apply.

Application Deadline: Midnight, September 15, 2005.

Notification: Individuals selected will be notified by September 30 by telephone or mail. Individuals selected must contact the Department's Wildlife Program in Olympia and accept the cougar permit within fifteen days of being selected. Individuals selected for a permit

will be required to have a veterinarian sign an affidavit verifying the selected individual owns dogs. Failure to contact the department or return the signed affidavit will result in forfeit of the permit. Permits may not be sold or reassigned by the hunter.

Contact Information

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Wildlife Program – Cougar Hunt
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091
Phone: (360) 902-2515

Disqualifications: A permit will not be issued to any person who has been convicted of unlawful use of dogs under RCW 77.15.245 within the five year period prior to December 1, 2004. Any person issued a permit who is subsequently convicted of any wildlife offense while participating in a pursuit-or-kill or pursuit-only season, or

who violates any condition of the permit, will have the permit revoked and will be ineligible to participate in the remainder of the 3-year pilot program.

Hunter Training: Successful applicants must complete a training program prior to participating in a permit season with the aid of dogs. The training program is comprised of printed materials on cougar sex identification, species identification (i.e., lynx, bobcat, black bear, and grizzly bear), and hunt season rules. Individuals selected for a cougar permit must sign and return an affidavit indicating they read the materials.

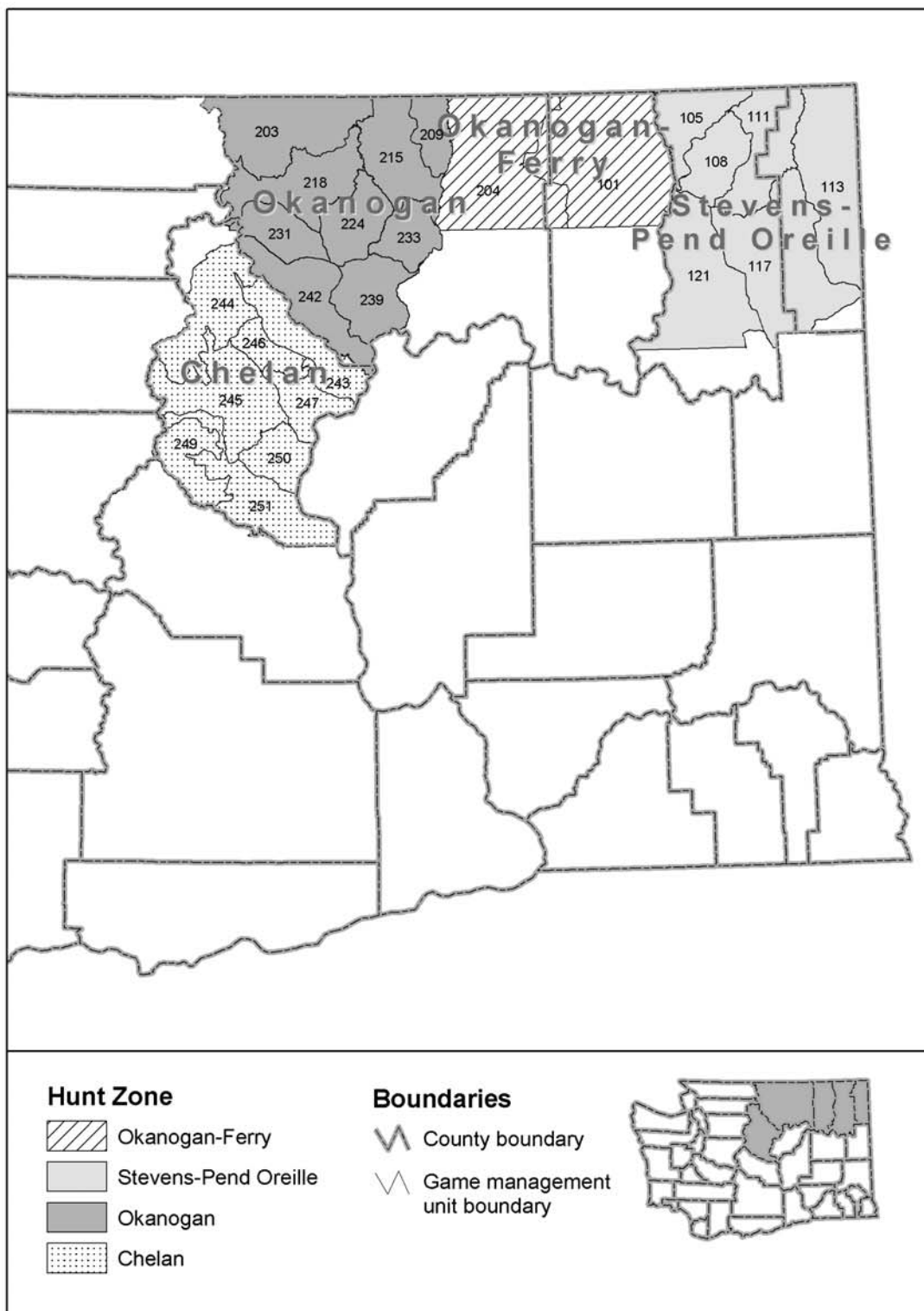
Hunter logbook: Hunters are required to maintain a daily data logbook for each day they hunt cougar and the logbook must be in their possession while hunting cougar. Permit hunters must mail the logbook to WDFW-Cougar hunt, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091 by **April 10, 2006**.

Permit Only Seasons

Hunt Choice	Hunt Zone	Area Description	QUOTA		2005-06 Permits
			Total	Female	
9001	Okanogan	Those portions of GMUs 203, 209, 215, 218, 233, 224, 231, 239, and 242 within Okanogan County	28	11	34
9002	Chelan	Those portions of GMUs 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 249, 250, and 251 within Chelan County	10	4	12
9003	Ferry-Okanogan	GMUs 101, 204	26	10	31
9004	Stevens-Pend Oreille	Those portions of GMUs 105, 108, 111, 113, 117, 121 within Stevens and Pend Oreille counties	38	15	46

Quota Hotline and Reporting Requirements	
Before going hunting	After going hunting
Permit hunters must call the cougar quota hotline before going hunting to find out if the hunt zone is open or closed for killing a cougar. Call toll-free 1-866-DOG-HUNT (1-866-364-4868) or (509) 625-4700.	If a permit hunter kills a cougar, he or she must notify WDFW within 24 hours of the kill. Please call the quota hotline or any WDFW Regional office list on page 2 to report a kill. Hunters also must present the cougar skull and pelt (with proof of sex naturally attached) to WDFW within 5 days of notification of kill for sealing. Present the skull and hide so that teeth and biological samples can be taken. Placing a stick or wedge in the cougar's mouth after harvesting it aids in the removal of teeth. Please call a regional office (page 2) to make arrangements to have a cougar checked.
No one may possess an open WDFW seal for cougar unless the seal has been cut by a licensed taxidermist or fur dealer who has received and invoiced the pelt for processing.	

Cougar hunt zones



COUGAR HUNTING SEASON WITHOUT THE AID OF DOGS

Attention Hunters: General cougar season in Chelan, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, and Pend Oreille counties has changed.

Hunt Name	2005-06 General Seasons	Area Description	Special Restrictions
General A	Aug. 1, 2005 – Mar. 15, 2006	Statewide, except GMUs within Chelan, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, or Pend Oreille counties	Any legal weapon
General B	Oct. 16 – Nov. 19, 2005	GMUs 101-121, 203, 204, 209-247, 249-251 within Chelan, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, or Pend Oreille counties	Any legal weapon
General C	Sept. 1 – Nov. 30, 2005	GMUs 101-121, 203, 204, 209-247, 249-251 within Chelan, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, or Pend Oreille counties	Archery deer or elk hunters and muzzleloader deer or elk hunters may hunt for cougar during their respective deer or elk seasons and must use equipment consistent with their deer or elk tag

License/Tag Required: A valid big game hunting license which includes cougar as a species option is required to hunt cougar. A second cougar transport tag/license may be purchased to take a second cougar.

Bag Limit: Two (2) cougar during the 2005-2006 hunting season. It is illegal to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens or an adult cougar accompanied by spotted kittens.

Hunting Method: Hunters may use any lawful big game modern firearm, archery, or muzzleloader equipment for hunting cougar, EXCEPT during General C Seasons. The use of dogs to hunt cougar is prohibited EXCEPT during Public Safety Cougar Removal and Commission authorized permit hunts.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q. If I apply for a public safety cougar removal permit, can I also apply for a cougar permit for the new hunt in northeastern Washington?
- A. Yes, you can apply for and, if selected, participate in both hunts. However, the statewide bag limit is two (2) cougar.
- Q. During a cougar permit hunt, can a designated dog handler harvest a cougar?
- A. No, only the permit hunter may harvest a cougar.
- Q. Can a dog handler pursue cougar?
- A. Yes, a dog handler can pursue cougar when he/she is in the physical presence of the permit hunter. Pursuit is anytime dogs, which are not on a leash or restrained, are in the act of tracking a cougar. However, a dog handler can walk a dog on a leash or transport a dog in a motorized vehicle when he/she is not in the physical presence of the permit hunter.
- Q. What is included in the training program for permit cougar hunts with the aid of dogs?
- A. The training program is comprised of printed materials on cougar sex identification, species identification (i.e., lynx, bobcat, black bear, and grizzly bear), and hunt season rules. Individuals selected for a cougar permit must sign and return an affidavit indicating they read the materials and own a dog capable of tracking and baying a cougar.

For more information, please contact: WDFW, Wildlife Program, 600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091; phone (360) 902-2515; <http://wdfw.wa.gov>